

and severance for those who dealt in Federal waters. We passed that law overwhelmingly. The rule was created and developed by the Department of Minerals Management.

Unfortunately, the rule they are proposing is not going to work. It does not make the current system more simple. It, in fact, makes it more complicated. It is not going to get us out of court. It is going to keep us in court and litigation.

I think the vote is going to be very close. The honorable Senator from California has a different view. She has stated on the floor that she thinks the oil companies are intentionally underpaying, although there has not been one lawsuit, to my knowledge, filed that has claimed "intentional" underpayment. The claimed underpayment is based on an honest disagreement of what the rules and regulations say and how these payments should be calculated, which is very complicated, as the Senator from Oklahoma, who is quite knowledgeable and quite an expert in this area, has shared on this floor.

In conclusion, I am the lead author of a bill to put every single penny we can get from these oil royalties into the U.S. Treasury. The bill I have, with 21 other Senators, proposes a good way to spend that money. So I do not want to see us shortchanged at all. But I also think that going forward with this rule, which makes it more complicated, will not meet that end; it will only make it worse. It will keep us from redirecting these revenues, at least the full amount of them, the way we know we can.

So I urge, when we vote next week, to vote with the Senator from Texas, Mrs. HUTCHISON, to keep this rule as a work-in-progress until we can come up with a simple way to get this done. I will be voting that way and urge my colleagues to also.

TRIBUTE TO KOREAN ADOPTEES

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I feel compelled to say something about a special group of people. There is a wonderful gathering of people in Washington. As you know, we have hundreds and thousands of people who come every week to Washington. We cannot come to the floor to talk about every group that comes to Washington because then we would be on the floor for a long time.

But there is a very special group in Washington, and it is a group of 400 Korean American, American Korean adults who were adopted from Korea in the 1950s and 1960s.

I will read from a wonderful article that appeared in USA Today yesterday about one particular orphan and her experience. But I want to say how proud I am, as cochair of the Adoption Caucus, to host, with many Members of

this body, this gathering of Americans who have come, actually, from all over the world—it is not just Korean adoptees from America but from Europe and other places who were adopted out of Korea—to share their stories.

This is one story by war orphan No. 1371. She is a writer for USA Today at this time in her life. She writes:

Malnutrition and a bacterial infection had drawn all but 8 pounds from my 24-inch frame. My thick black hair teemed with lice; my body glistened with circles of fresh infection created by oozing sores that covered 80% of my body.

Yet somehow I survived. Less than two months later, I was packed onto a shiny airliner with 96 other Korean children—four to a wicker basket—and carried to my adoptive parents, Dominic and Dorothy Enrico, in southern California.

At that moment I suffered what now seems like incomprehensible losses for one so young: my birth family, my country and the comfortable anonymity of growing up among people of the same race. What I gained was the opportunity to participate in an international adoption revolution that continues to be a testimony to the human potential for love and acceptance regardless of blood ties, race or ethnicity.

This young woman will join 400 other adults who have had this experience. And there have been over 140,000 young people—infants and young children and teenagers—adopted from Korea, and many of them have come to the United States. In almost every instance, it has been a happy and joyful experience for the adoptee and for the family.

The Korean adoptions have opened up a new thought in America: that families could be made of a people who looked different—because love does not know a color; love does not know family bounds.

So because of the great work of the Government and Catholic Charities and many others that have made this possible, we now have families in America that look very different with family members who love others from different parts of the world and from different races. It is a testimony to the greatness of the human potential for love and for companionship.

I am proud to sponsor this group of adults. We hope to continue the work of international adoption. We would like to find a home for every child in the world in the country in which they were born. But if there is not a home there—if no one wants them, if they are not able to find a home—then we need to find them a home somewhere in the world.

Senator JESSE HELMS, an adoptive father himself, which a lot of people do not know—he and his wife adopted a special needs child, so he has personal experience in adoption—is the lead sponsor of a tremendous piece of legislation that is going to lay an international framework, a legal framework, so children from all over the world, including the United States, can find a home and they will not have to

grow up infested with lice or they will not have to have a little body oozing with sores, so they will have a mother and a father, preferably two parents. But if we could find one caring adult for each child in the world, that is our hope.

So that is one of the great gatherings that is taking place. I wanted to honor them by reading from that article this morning and by wishing them a wonderful conference at the J.W. Marriott. We will be hosting a reception for them in the Capitol later today.

I invite my colleagues to drop by and see for themselves the great miracle of adoption.

TRIBUTE TO JIMMIE DAVIS OF BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I rise on behalf of Senator BREAU and myself to take note of the 100th birthday of one of Louisiana's favorite sons and one of our Nation's finest talents. Most Americans know Jimmie Davis through his world-famous song, "You Are My Sunshine," one of the most popular songs in the history of recorded music. However, for Louisianians, Jimmie Davis is much more than a consummate entertainer and southern gentleman, he also helped lead Louisiana's government to new heights, passing the first retirement benefits for State employees, the first reforestation legislation and the first program to give free milk to school children.

Jimmie Davis has been a college teacher, shaken hands with five or six Presidents, appeared in half a dozen movies, performed with stars such as Gene Autry, Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley, and twice was elected Governor of Louisiana.

During his second term as Governor, the State's economy was in a downward spiral. However, by the end of his term, employment was higher than ever, personal incomes were up, school teachers saw their full salary schedule implemented and the ambitious Toledo Bend Dam was started.

Jimmie Davis is widely known as a beloved and colorful leader. One day on the way to his office, he rode his horse up the Capitol steps, into the elevator and into his office. He ended every State legislative session with his band's rendition of "It Makes No Difference Now."

Jimmie Davis is truly a Louisiana State treasure and a treasure for all Americans. He definitely is our sunshine.

He is a man whom we all hope we can be like, because he is, as I say, celebrating his 100th birthday. So with those of us who hope to live to be 100, Jimmie Davis is a good example of how to do it.

Jimmie Davis still loves to sing to this day, and if Majority Leader LOTT

would encourage him, he would probably join the Senate singing group because he is still quite active.

Governor Jimmie Davis is one of Louisiana's favorite sons.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative assistant proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following time under the control of Senator COVERDELL, the following Senators be recognized to speak in morning business:

Senator DORGAN for up to 15 minutes, to be followed by Senator COLLINS for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE TAX RELIEF PROPOSAL

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, at the end of July, beginning of August, the Congress, in an almost unprecedented fashion and with speed, passed a very significant tax relief bill in Washington. It has been the subject of much discussion and debate.

We could not find very accurate descriptions of this tax proposal, and so Senators and House Members who believed in tax relief went home, and for the last month they have held 500, 700 town halls. They have been throughout the country describing what the tax proposal actually is.

I remember being in a small city in the northern part of my State, Rome, GA, and saying, so far, I had read very little that adequately described what the totality of the tax proposal was.

I have just come from a press conference in the Senate gallery with House and Senate Members. I was taken by the fact that of the six or seven Members there, they all spoke of this mischaracterization they were struggling with when they initially got home. It was characterized as a very large tax bill that would disrupt Social Security and Medicare. There was very little understanding of the proposal, which is this: It is proposed that over the next 10 years, there will be some \$3 trillion in surpluses.

Now, these surpluses are a product of the fact that over the last 4 years, a majority of the U.S. Congress has argued for balanced budgets and for financial constraint. That has produced a very positive economy and, indeed, we are now seeing these numbers that suggest there could be up to \$3 trillion in surplus over the next 10 years. Well,

what are Washington policymakers going to do about it?

At the end of July, the Congress passed this proposal. It said we would take 60 percent of all the surpluses and set it aside for Social Security. It would either be used for Social Security reform or to pay down debt. It assigned 17 percent of all these surpluses to Medicare, education, and domestic priorities to make sure that we keep Medicare sound and whole. It takes 23 percent of the surpluses and returns it to American workers—23 percent.

Now, Chairman Greenspan of the Federal Reserve is quoted all the time on this. He said this is what he would do with it. If he had his first choice, he would pay down the debt. Sixty percent of our proposal does that. He said his second choice would be tax relief. Twenty-three percent of our proposal does that. He said the last thing he would do would be to spend it; don't spend it, and even this proposal spends 17 percent of it.

So the debate we are having is over whether or not 23 percent of those surpluses should be returned to American workers or left in Washington to be spent. As Americans have understood this proposal, they have begun, in increasing numbers, to support it. A majority of Americans now believe the President should sign the tax relief proposal. I don't know if that will compel him to do so, but America has begun to understand that this is a very balanced, reasoned plan.

Why do we think this is so important? American workers today are paying the highest taxes they have paid since World War II. I will repeat that. American workers are paying at the highest tax level they have paid since World War II. About half of their paychecks are consumed by a government at some level—local, State, and Federal. I have said this before. If Thomas Jefferson were here today, he would faint; and when he woke up, he would be very mad that we had ever come to a point that government was taking half of what labor produces. That is what we face today.

Economic opportunity is a fundamental component of what makes American liberty work. It is a fact that Americans have had economic independence and they have turned into a people who are so bold, so visionary, so entrepreneurial, and so confident. We are a very confident people. It goes all the way back to the Revolution. American workers at that time were already the highest paid workers in the world. Since that time, we have seen what happens to a people who have their own independence. We must never take that away from the American psyche and culture. If we do, we will threaten the way American liberty has worked.

Therefore, this tax relief proposal is not some disjointed political venture. This tax relief proposal is instrumental

in the nurturing of one of the fundamental principles of American liberty, i.e., economic independence. There is not a day in this town—and I have been here a little over 6 years, about the same time as the Presiding Officer—that somebody hasn't bemoaned the fact that there was something American families needed or ought to do that they can't. They don't have enough insurance, or some of them don't have any; they don't have enough housing; they don't have enough to pursue the educational purposes they seek.

If the government is taking half of the resources away from them, are we surprised and shocked that these families don't have enough to accomplish the fundamental goals they seek, that they can't pay the insurance premiums? If the government would leave the money with the persons who earned it, they could solve those problems.

There is not a wizard, wonk, or bureaucrat in this city who can more appropriately determine what a family needs to keep itself whole and healthy than the family itself. Therefore, there is no public policy that is more important than nurturing the economic liberty and keeping the checking accounts of American workers healthy so they can do what they have done for the last two-plus centuries.

Economic liberty is a fundamental component of American culture. That is what this tax relief proposal is about. It is about making sure more of those resources stay in those checking accounts.

When you take too much out of those checking accounts—which we have been historically doing now for about three decades-plus—you change the way Americans function. We are not who we are because of our genes. We are who we are because we have been free. When you reduce the resources American families have, you start seeing things you don't like to see.

Let me give you a couple of examples. This year, for the first time since the Great Depression, workers in the United States—our workers—will have a negative savings rate. What is left to save after the Government marches through the checking account?

If an average family in America is making \$50,000 or \$55,000 a year, and you take half of it away, is there enough left to get the job done? The answer is no. So there is nothing to save. So when there is a crisis, there is no ability to respond to it or to prepare adequately for retirement. If you leave the resources in those checking accounts, you will see the savings go up. They will have the resources to do the kinds of things they are supposed to do, including saving for problems or retirement.

Here is another one. Bankruptcies are at an all-time high. Credit card debt is at an all-time high. There are